

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 6-25 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 14-16 and 21 are amended. No new matter is added.

I. Interview

Applicant appreciates the courtesies shown to Applicant's representative by Examiner Greene in the August 7 personal interview. Applicant's separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the Office Action's indication that claims 6-13 are allowed and that claim 22 contains allowable subject matter.

III. Claim Objections

The Office Action objects to claims 14, 15 and 21 for allegedly having improper antecedent basis. As these claims have been amended in accordance with the Examiner's helpful suggestions, withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

IV. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

A. Claims 1-4 and 14 over Sigling, EP 374 and Schnedecker

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 and 14 under (1) 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,613,297 (Sigling), (2) 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over EP 1 215 374 (EP 374), and (3) 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,338,273 (Schnedecker). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites, in part, "the partition wall including a portion whose thickness is reduced toward a tip in the end portion." This feature was incorporated from claim 5 (now canceled), which was not rejected over Sigling, EP 374 or Schnedecker. Claim 14 includes a similar feature.

For at least this reason, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 14, as well as dependent claims 2-4 is respectfully requested.

B. Claims 1-3, 14, 16-19, or 22-25 over JP 726 or Goldsmith

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over JP 2003-24726 (JP 726) and 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,781,831 (Goldsmith). The Office Action also rejects claims 16-18, 20 and 22-25 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over JP 726 and claims 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Goldsmith. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, claims 1 and 14 include the features of claim 5, which was not rejected over JP 726 or Goldsmith. Claim 16 includes a similar feature. For at least this reason, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-3, 14, 16-19 and 22-25 is respectfully requested.

C. Claims 1-3, 5, 14, 16-18, 24 and 25 over Okawara

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 5, 14, 16-18, 24 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/018123 (Okawara). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Okawara's earliest effective date is June 5, 2003. The present application claims priority to JP 2003-115986, filed on April 21, 2003. Because the present application has an earlier effective date, Okawara does not qualify as prior art. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.55, attached is an English language translation of the priority document, and a statement that the translation of the certified copy is accurate.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 14, 16-18, 24 and 25 is respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-4, and 6-25 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:AEG/jaf

Attachment:
Certified Translation of Priority Document

Date: August 29, 2007

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